

REFERENCES to the *VIEW*,

Taken from an UPPER ROOM on the ANGEL-HILL,

BURY ST. EDMUND'S.

THE first principal Object to the Left on an eminence, call'd *St. Edmund's Hill*, is the new Seat of *John Symonds Esquire*, Recorder of BURY, L. L. D. and Professor of modern Languages in the University of CAMBRIDGE. Farther to the Right over the tops of the Ruins is seen RUSHBROOK Hall the noble Seat of Sir *Charles Davers Bart.* The Third distant Object in the centre of the Piece is HARDWICK House, the Seat of the Reverend Sir *John Cullum Bart.* formerly a Seat of the Lord Abbot, of Bury. The large Building exhibited directly under HARDWICK, is the Assembly House and the Space before it *Angel-Hill*, whereon the Fair is kept, so long noted for the Resort of Genteel Company. The Ruins and Portals, are the Remains of the famous *Abby*, founded Anno 1020 by *Canutus the Great*, who dedicated it to *St. Edmund*; He adorn'd it with various Royal Gifts, offer'd his own Crown to the *Martyr*, settled Benedictine Monks therein with an *Abbot*, endowed it with many large Manors, and lastly deposited the *Holy King* and *Martyr* afore said, in a Noble Shrine set with Jewels and precious Stones. Having received such Honours; the *Abby* rose by Degrees to a Splendor equall'd by few. There was a perpetual Resort of Strangers and Foreigners to the Place: excited by Curiosity, or Veneration. Many of the British Monarchs were also frequent Guests of the *Monastery*.

This was one of the Places, which the great Antiquary Mr. *Leland* visited by a Commission received under the Broad-Seal from King *Henry the 8th*; and whose words I shall transcribe as a lively Representation thereof 'A City more finely seated (saith he) the Sun hath not seen, so curiously, so delicately standeth it on an easy Ascent or hanging of an Hill. with an *Abby* so incomparably magnificent, that of itself it might be taken for a City, so many gates there are in it, Gates of Brass, so many Towers! and a Church than which nothing can be more stately, upon which as Appendages, attend three others, standing Gloriously in one and the same Church Yard, and all of Passing fine and curious Workmanship.'

This *Abby* remain'd Five Hundred and Nineteen Years, in possession of the Benedictines afore said, and was govern'd by Thirty three *Abbots*; the first of whom was *Uvio*, being constituted *Abbot* the same Year the *Abby* was founded (*Viz.*) 1020: And the last was *John de Melford*; who became *Abbot* Anno 1513, and govern'd the *Abby* 'till its Dissolution, when surrendering the same November the 4th. 1539, a Pension of 500 Marks per Annum, was settled on him, a Sum sufficient at that Time to have supported him in Affluence; but he did not live to enjoy it, for seeing the Destruction of his beautiful *Monastery*, it so affected him that he died soon *Viz.* on the 4th. of *March* following, and was buried in *St. Mary's Church*; his Character was that he was Learned, Affable and Upright, and the Examiners reported the *Abby* to be free from all Scandal; The King therefore intended making *St. Edmund's Bury*, a BISHOP'S See, as may be seen in the Cotton Library in his own Hand writing, but alter'd his Purpose afterwards.

Lord *Herbert* in his History of King *Henry the 8th.* makes a Remark with a particular Eye to this *Abbey*, 'The King (saith he) was petition'd by Bishop *Latimer* and others, that some few of the Houses for the Virtues of the Persons in them, and for the Benefit of the Country might be left for pious Uses. But the whole was Invaded; for besides the Houses and Lands taken away there was much Money to be made of the Stock of Cattle and Corn; of the Timber, Lead, Bells, &c. but chiefly of the Plate, and Church Ornaments, which though not Reckon'd may be conjectur'd by that one *Monastery* of *St. Edmund's Bury*, whence was taken Five thousand Marks of Gold and Silver, besides many precious Stones of great Value.'

The Church was accounted one of the largest in the WORLD, being Five Hundred and thirteen feet in length, and its Western Front Two hundred and forty feet broad. In it were inter'd, beside *St. Edmund* afore nam'd, *Constantia* Daughter of King *William the Conqueror*, and *Richmond* the Conqueror's Nephew, who shar'd the Command in the Battle of HASTINGS; he died Anno 1093 and was buried near the South Door before the Altar of *St. Nicholas*: *Alan* Earl of Britain, and *Alan Niger* Earl of Britain; *Thomas Plantagenet* or *Thomas of Brotherton*, Son of King *Edward the first*, Earl Marshal of ENGLAND, and Earl of NORFOLK; *Thomas of Beaufort*, Son of *John of Guant*, Duke of LANCASTER, and half Brother to King *Henry the 4th*, he died Anno 1424. *Mary* Queen of FRANCE, Sister to King *Henry the 8th*, was buried Anno 1533, on the South side of the high Altar; *Robert the Martyr*, who was crucified by the Jews: Sir *William de Elmham* Knight, Lord of BOWTHORPE, FRENCH, WESTHORPE, and INGOLDSTHORPE: Most of its *Abbots* were also here inter'd, in their pontifical Robes; Sir *William Tressell*, Sir *William Spencer*, *John* of *Lydgate* the famous Poet Monk of this *Abbey* &c. &c. The Monuments erected in Memory of These, and other Persons of Distinction were most of them very Magnificent, but were soon after the Dissolution intirely demolish'd together with the Building. According to *Speed*, the Revenues of the *Abby* were reckon'd £2336. 16s. per Annum. The Churches of *St. Mary*, and *St. James*, seen in the Piece are very noble Structures. The first which was founded Anno 1004, is esteemed the largest Parish Church in ENGLAND, and is much admir'd for the lightness of its Pillars. *St. James* Church was Rebuilding at the time of the Dissolution of the *Monastery*, and afterwards completed by the Munificence of King *Edward the 6th*, its singular neatness is very admirable.

The first Grand Tower or Gate was the Entrance to the *Abbot's Palace*, and is a Specimen of the Beauty, and Grandeur of the whole, being esteem'd one of the finest Pieces of Gothic Architecture in ENGLAND. The second Tower, with circular and arch Windows, is of very Ancient date being built before the Conquest, and much excite the Attention of the Curious; this (though now used as a Steeple,) was the Portal to the great Church of the *Abby* it is built of Massive Free-stone and Ornamented with carv'd Devices, &c.

N. B. It will be proper so to place the Picture as that the Eye be nearly on a Level with the Horizon, a more elevated situation would not produce so good an Effect.